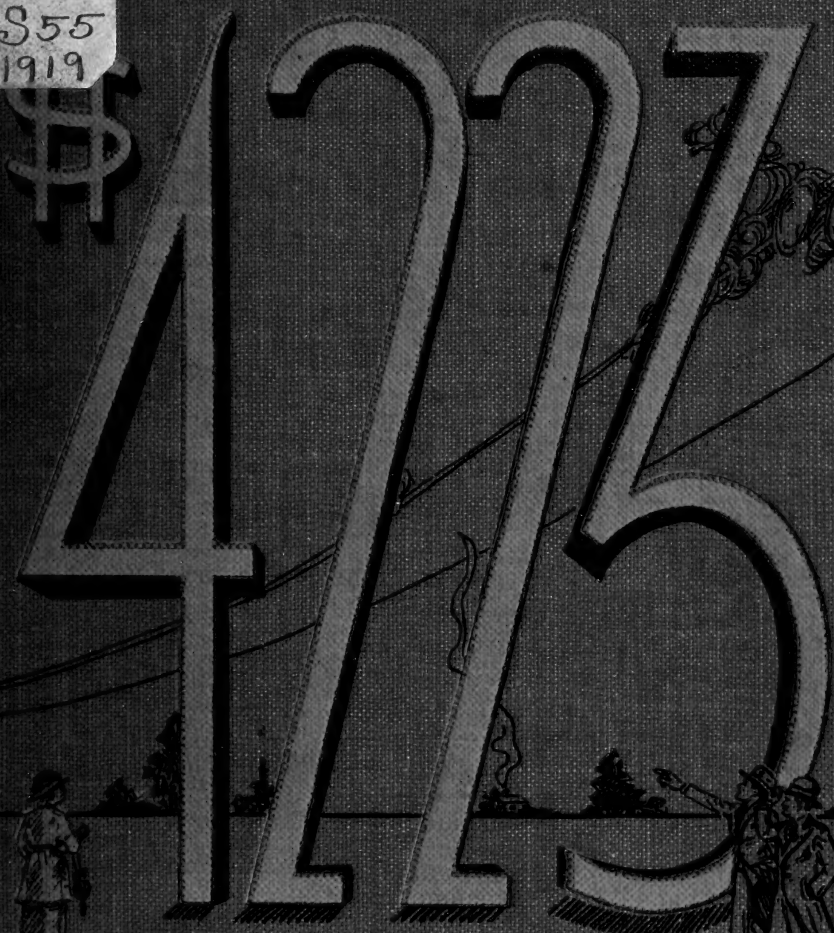


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1919



Profit from
A TOWN LOT

IN ONE YEAR

by

H. Cecil Sheppard

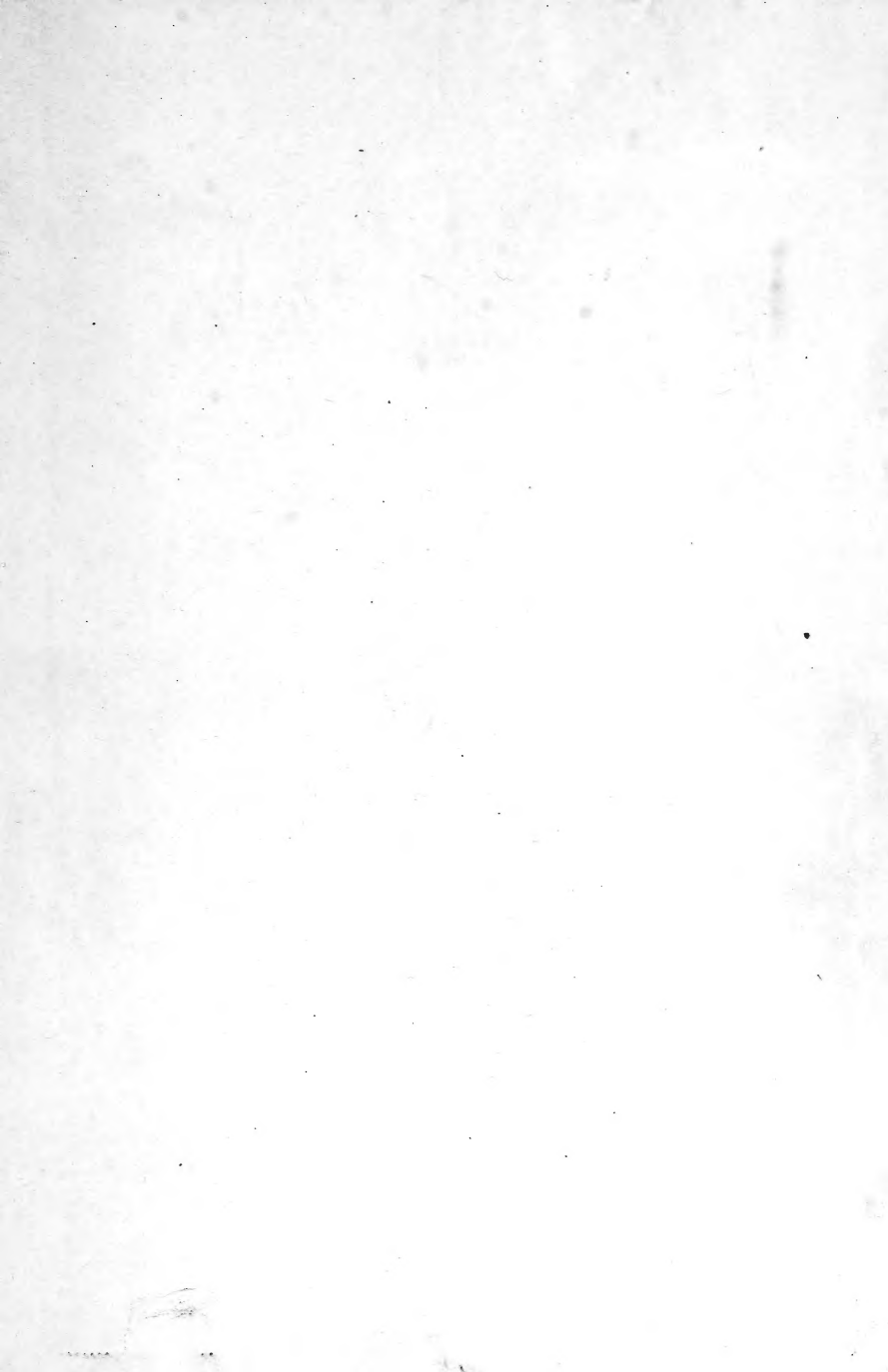


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223.00 Profit
in one year on
a town lot

By
H. Cecil Sheppard

THIRD EDITION

Published by
H. CECIL SHEPPARD
Berea, Ohio
1919

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PREFACE

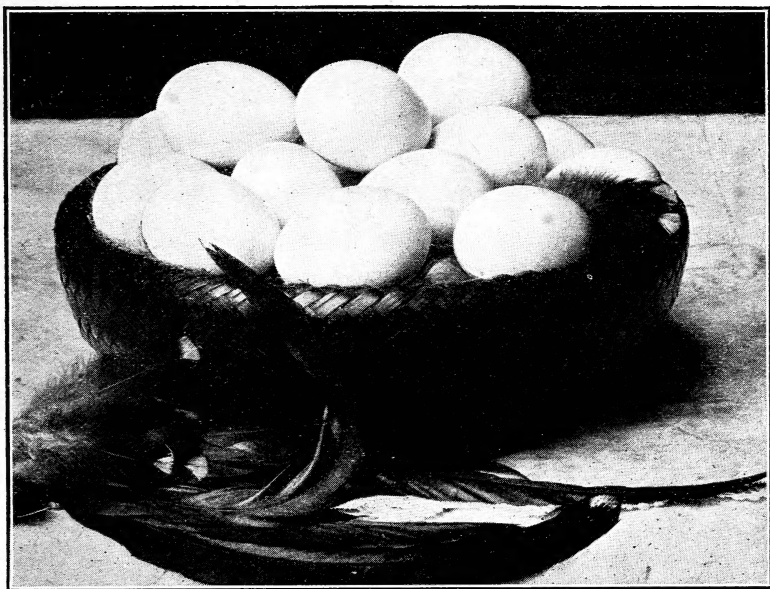
I have set down for publication in this book, the disastrous and profitable experiences covering the six years from the time I first interested myself in chickens, until in the sixth year I took a net profit of \$4,223.00 from my small poultry plant on a town lot. That year my books showed sales of \$9,515.00, with expenses for advertising, feed bills, wages, and so on, amounting to \$5,292.00. The benefit of my experience up to the time of revising the third edition, has also been incorporated.

I would have gladly paid \$100.00 during the first years of my experience, could such information have come to me. It has been no small task to write and revise this book, but I feel that it will be worth while.

Fraternally yours,

H. Cecil Shppard





JUST as no two eggs are quite alike so no two people can succeed in quite the same manner—but the “other fellow’s” experience costs less and saves time (when we are wise enough to admit it!) so why not save dollars by using it? In your selling, look for ideas as fresh as “just laid” eggs.

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CHAPTER I

A Little Personal History



I SUPPOSE it would be a good plan to commence at the beginning! So I am going to tell you my actual experience in the poultry business, step by step, from the first year when my total sales were \$160.00 to the gross income of \$9,515.00 the sixth year—all on a town lot.

Back to the Country

Cleveland was my home for a number of years. While there my health was not the very best. It looked to me pretty much as though it were a choice between getting farther away from the nerve-racking push and bustle of the city, and spending more time in the great out of doors, or of prematurely joining the ranks of the countless slumbering army. Naturally, I resolved to go "back to the country" and soon selected a location.

Mrs. Sheppard and myself looked over a number of places on the southern shore of Lake Erie. We decided to settle in Berea where conditions were ideal, good schools and colleges to educate the children, and all modern conveniences. It is located on three trunk lines of railroads and a corking good electric line, so that shipping facilities are excellent.

The Town Lot

Well, I leased property for a couple of years, but at the end of six months we were so deeply in love with the location that the property became a Sheppard possession. We moved to Berea the latter part of March, 1906. It was a revelation to me. There we were, living on a nice town lot, the air pure and sweet, and as Spring pressed on and as Nature budded forth in all her beauty, the grass grew green and the air became redolent with perfume from a wilderness of fragrant blossoms. The songbirds returned and added greatly to the surroundings with their cheerful and sweet songs. As the weather became warm, we (my wife and children) commenced fixing up our lawn and preparing the soil for a garden. After the ground was nicely cultivated, we commenced to set out trees, berry bushes, grapevines, sow the garden seed, and set out the plants. By the first of June everything seemed to fairly

jump out of the ground to meet the warm rays of the Summer sun. Midsummer found us enjoying luxuries of our bountiful harvest of fresh vegetables from our own garden. It was quite a contrast to what a city man had been accustomed. It was not only a crop of good vegetables, but a crop of gladness and joy as well. Our city friends envied our good fortune. My wife could prepare an excellent meal from the garden, with a few nice springers added to the bill of fare. A little later our flowers blossomed forth in all the colors of the rainbow. The next season we enjoyed a generous crop of red raspberries and strawberries. Two years later our plum trees began to bear. The next year the peach trees bloomed out in their superb style and joined the plum trees in giving us a nice lot of delicious fruit. The next year the cherry trees began to bear.

Giving Up My Road Business

The five years' experience directly preceding the year in which I made a net income of \$4,223.00 from chickens on a town lot, caused me to sever my connections with the concern for whom I was traveling, and go into the chicken business in earnest and not as a "side line," which it had been up to that time. It took me a great many months to make up my mind regarding this change, because I have many warm friends among the people I visit and it almost seemed as though—so firm had become our friendship—that everywhere I set my foot was "home, sweet home." And of course after so long a term—travelling the same territory for twenty years for the one house—I had a mighty good business and enjoyed a fairly satisfactory salary, as salaries were in those days, and I had the friendship and confidence of several of the largest merchants in my line.

When I resigned my position on the road, I was not only "passing up" the rewards of twenty years' hard work but was also losing the social visits to all my old acquaintances on the road, and what was worse still, was the severing of my pleasant business relations with my company. In the long years I was with them there wasn't anything that ever came up to disturb our pleasant relations. They were very good to me and I appreciated it. In fact, all the employees were treated with consideration, and it seemed like one big, happy family. It surely did seem like leaving home to sever my ties with this firm. My chickens were demanding more of my time, and I was really forced to give up my road position or my chickens. I chose the former and sent my



Members of American Poultry Association visiting Sheppard's Farm. Artist Sewell of R. J. P. fame took the party unawares with his camera while they were having refreshments under the shade of the big oak.

resignation to my house, to take effect four months later. When I laid aside my grip I wasn't sure that I could resist the temptation of making a trip. At first it seemed very unnatural, but as time pressed on, I became so taken up with my chickens that I gradually became weaned from my former work. Of course, I missed my old friends on the road who were so generous to me. If perchance any of them read this book, I want to say that I haven't forgotten them and shall always have pleasant memories of them. Across the broad miles I extend the glad hand for a hearty shake.

On the cover of this book I use a figure which, to some of you, may seem impossibly large—\$4,223.00 is a sum of money not to be sneezed at. Fourteen years ago this would have seemed like a tremendous sum to me. But in 1912 it became a reality. What I did, thousands of others have since done—many of them much better than this. What I did, you can do. These figures are not too big for you to reach. There is no logical reason why—if you make up your mind you will reach them—you can't do so. You are a man or woman of ordinary intelligence, else you wouldn't be reading this book, and I here firmly state that any one person with average intellect, can succeed in the chicken business if the ideas set down in the following chapters of this book are followed.

90 Per Cent Perspiration

I certainly am not a wizard. I believe that genius is 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration. There is nothing magical about my success or method. I started with a very limited knowledge of the poultry business and a still more limited capital. Common sense was probably my greatest stock in trade.

I am going to tell you as simply and plainly as the nose on a man's face, how I have managed my chickens and of course you can do what appears practical to you. I don't expect you to agree with me on every detail, but on the principal questions, my methods are thoroughly practical. There is no theory in this book. It is all the result of practical experience. I am not attempting to give advice—but simply stating what I have done and how I have done it.



CHAPTER II

THREE "P'S" IN THE POULTRY POD

Pleasure, Pep, Profit

The Pleasure in Poultry



THERE is nothing new about this thought, but unless people have a natural liking for poultry so that they can get real pleasure out of the work—because there is a lot of hard work about it!—they had better not start the business even on a small scale. There invariably is, of course, a certain pleasure following the accomplishment of profitable work—but this kind of pleasure follows after the profit and does not go right along with the work required to earn the profit.

Although I now sometimes have as many as five thousand birds at one time on my farm, I never grow tired of these beautiful, active creatures—they have a fascination for me. They should for you,—and I believe they will—if you are to secure a genuine pleasure, taking your loss along with the profit, getting your bumps—not such stiff jolts as I received, I trust—and then profiting by the experience which I set down in this book, as well as your own experience.

The Backyard Laboratory

The very best laboratory is one's own poultry yard. You can take the same methods I have used and am using and put them into practical experience in your own "laboratory" every day in the year, and by avoiding many of the pitfalls and eliminating many of the stumbling blocks, your pleasure with poultry will be just that much more increased.

Making a Profit—Getting Birds With Pep

In order to make profit from poultry it is very necessary that you secure birds with abundant vitality—plenty of pep! A writer on poultry once said that the surest way to secure vitality, vigor and constitution is by the "survival of the fittest"—in other words a process of elimination by means of the ax! Well, to a certain extent I found that true. As I went more into the commercial end of the poultry business, I saw the imperative necessity of having two attributes in my birds. First,

*They
should
be
eager
to
lay.*



vitality—or pep—whatever you want to call it. Second, the habit of systematic laying.

Deciding on the Best Breed

You can secure these two admirable qualities either by a very careful selection of the right breed, or by a process of elimination on your own plant. Although it costs more to begin with, to purchase the right breed, I am convinced that considerable time is saved. You secure a flying start at once.

You may decide to start with several breeds, as I did. I kept four the first year, and at the end of the first year I found I had three breeds too many, and decided to keep just one. It did not take me long to decide on the breed to keep. The first year I found it very profitable to be getting a good yield of eggs during the cold winter months, when eggs were high and when my neighbors were not getting any. In cutting down the number of breeds I kept the breed that produced eggs abundantly during the winter months. This is one of the secrets of the business—to get a breed that will produce eggs practically all the year round, and especially when the price of eggs is high. You will find there is a tremendous demand for chickens of this kind, and if you have them your neighbor wants them and is willing to pay you a good price for a setting of eggs or for a pen of birds.

Starting on a Small Scale

I have told you the importance of selecting the proper breed. Now you ask whether one ought to start on a small or on a large scale. The commercial agencies will tell you that 90 per cent of the business houses fail some time during their lifetime. Probably the principal reason for this is because they start on too large a scale. It is like a boy learning to swim. If he jumps in deep water he drowns, but if he stays in shallow water until he learns, he then can go into deep water with safety.

On the other hand, I started my chickens on a small scale, and from the very beginning they were paying for their keep and a little more. I found it better to have the chickens working for me than for me to be working for them. I would suggest that you start in a small way and buy good stock to start with. You will find that it pays. There is always a demand for good stock, while the demand for poor stock is limited. It is a common error to invest in expensive chicken houses and buy cheap stock. Whatever breed you buy, go to some reputable breeder and secure good stock. Remember that it is quality of stock that pays the large dividends, and not the expensive poultry houses. You can raise good birds from good stock in a cheap building, but you cannot raise good birds from poor stock, no matter how good your buildings. If you have twenty-five, fifty or one hundred dollars to invest, buy a pen of five birds in place of a dozen.

I made the usual mistake beginners make by buying ordinary stock to start with. I went to a certain breeder and bought from his utility flock, and from other breeders the same quality. At the end of the first year I found I had made a serious mistake, as I had lost a year's time and had nothing but utility birds—something that intelligent chicken people don't want. It taught me a lesson, however, and I resolved to get the very best birds money could buy. At the end of the first year I had discarded my other breeds and had secured the best stock that money could buy of my favorite breed. At the end of the second year I had a flock of strictly high-grade birds, and found I was on the right road to success.

While this book is written mainly for the information and inspiration of the family with but limited space for their poultry plant, it has a direct application to the flock kept by the farmer's wife, and the farmer's children as well.

Hens or Horses?

Mrs. George L. Russell, of Chilhowee, Missouri, said something of intense interest in the "Fruit-Grower" a couple years ago. She compared hens with horses and started out by asking a few questions.

"What if the whole flock should be stolen? What if a storm comes and kills every hen on the place? What if they all get sick and die? You will admit none of these things are likely to take off the whole flock. But granted they do, why, then, we have not lost any more capital invested than we have when one mare lies down and dies. And should these calamities befall a flock of chickens, with a comparatively few dollars one can start over and in one spring raise enough pullets to fill the laying house.

"It is much easier to raise a few dollars to buy a flock of hens to start over than it is to raise enough money to buy one good brood mare.

"If we were in the commercial egg farming business, this would be a story of larger profits, but as we are only farmers, the chickens are considered just one of the many farm crops, the same as hogs, cattle, oats, wheat and corn.

"As is the case on the majority of the farms, the farm woman cares for the chickens. It is a real pleasure to me to do this. In fact, I cannot find the time to spend with them that I would like to, as there are many other duties, besides being a mother, to attend to on the farm.

"The work with my chickens commenced with a worn-out hen house, surrounded by a dense plum thicket, where there was small chance of the sunlight ever appearing. You have all seen such houses with a row of nests and a path in front, the roosts occupying almost the whole interior, leaving no place for the hens to scratch and exercise.

"Even with this poor equipment, the hens paid \$112.00 the first year. This astonishing fact was hardly believed by my husband, but the figures were there to prove it, and he at once became interested in the chickens, building them a new house that fall."

My chickens gave me pleasure as well as increased my bank account. I mated up my first pens about February 1. My chickens had been laying all fall and winter, so the eggs were in splendid condition to incubate early. I set my incubator about February 15 and had my first chicks hatched from eggs from my own breeding pens, early in March. I commenced shipping hatching eggs the latter part of February. At the end of my first fiscal year, which ended August 1, 1907, I found I had

sold hatching eggs to the amount of \$71.00. I sold a few cockerels to the meat market and two for breeders. Adding these amounts to what I got for eggs which I sold to the market, I found that my first year's revenue was about \$160.00, besides having a fine lot of little chicks and a breeding pen from the previous season. I had thirty-one hens and was surprised to learn they had earned a little over \$5.00 each.

Ending the Second Year

At the end of the second year, I had more breeding pens than ever, and many more chicks. I found that my sales had reached a grand total of \$542.96. I naturally began to think the chicken business was all right. Before leaving Cleveland I had heard of several men who had failed. I could see that their failure was due to mismanagement or by wanting to get rich too quickly and starting in too heavily. I could see that it was no fault of the chickens. They were proving that if they were given a chance they would pay handsome dividends on the investment and for the time spent with them.

I started my third year with more encouragement, and, as I found the poultry journals were doing me a splendid service, I again increased my advertising. I had raised a larger flock and had no trouble in disposing of it again. I mated more breeding pens and still found that my supply of hatching eggs was not equal to the increasing demand. At the end of the third year my sales figured \$890.51 for the year. In addition to this I had on hand a still larger flock of chicks and breeding pens.

\$1,910.10 at End of Fourth Year

At the beginning of the fourth year I could see a grand future dawning for this remarkable breed, so again resolved to increase my capacity. At the end of the fourth year I found my sales for the year to be \$1,910.10. The demand had steadily increased the fourth year, so I made still greater preparations for increased business for the fifth year. I wasn't disappointed in my expectations, as you will readily see when I tell you that the sales for my fifth year amounted to \$4,094.00.

My business kept right on growing and at the end of the sixth year, I found that I had more than doubled the fifth year—my book showed that the sales amounted to \$9,515.00.

Making the \$4,223.00

I kept about ninety females for my breeding pens, and about ten males, selling off my culls for table use. I farmed out a lot of utility stock to farmers. By doing this I was enabled to supply a heavy demand for utility eggs that came from birds that had plenty of range and eggs strong in fertility that produced vigorous stock. I sold many eggs from \$2.50 to \$30.00 per setting, and raised about five hundred youngsters. I followed the ideas described in this book. At the end of the year I found I had sold \$9,515.00 worth of stock and eggs. My expenses, including advertising, feed bills, boy's wages, etc., amounted to \$5,292.00, leaving a balance of \$4,223.00.

These figures do not include the eggs and springers used on my table. The eggs and stock sold to the market would run about five hundred dollars. The balance of \$9,015.00 was from sales of hatching eggs, baby chicks and standard bred stock.



CHAPTER III

Incubators and Brooders



SOME one once asked me this question: "Is a hen's birthday when the egg is laid or when it is hatched?" I cannot answer! Nor have I been able to find a solution to the following questions:

Whether first the egg, or the hen?
Tell me, I pray, ye learned men.
The hen was first, or whence the egg?
Give us no more of your doubts, I beg.
The egg was first, or whence the hen?
Tell me how it came or when.

But I do know that "In the beginning is the egg."

So, with your permission, I will here discuss my experience with incubators and brooders.

As soon as we got nicely settled in our Berea home, we decided that the next thing was some chickens. So, off went my order for an incubator. Just a short time before this, I had visited a small poultry farm and was delighted by the beauty of the birds, and pleased with their utility as shown by the fact that they were working their heads off laying eggs in January. Some of them were busy in their nests. Others were trying to crowd them off. Others were cackling after laying. There seemed to be a general atmosphere of hustle and bustle in the hen houses. It certainly seemed unusual to observe so much industry in hen houses during mid-winter—and this condition made a great impression on me.

I placed my order for eggs from these fowls, because the first thing I was after was a breed that would produce winter as well as summer eggs—not occasionally but frequently and systematically. The eggs arrived in the spring, a few days later than the incubator.

Preliminary Testing of Incubator

The incubator was placed in the basement, and after regulating the machine so that the thermometer registered $102\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, I tested out the machine for two or three days to be sure that I had it well regulated before the eggs were put in. I didn't want to take the chance of a short hatch. A great deal had been said to me about the expense of



Type of brooder used when I commenced. These brooders prove very satisfactory. Have been replaced by a Modern Brooder System, which is illustrated a few pages on.

“experimentation,” and I wanted to avoid this so far as possible. The suggestions and instructions made by the manufacturer of the incubator were followed as carefully as possible, coupled with a few common sense ideas I had myself. And then I was all ready to put in the eggs!

The lamp was filled with the best oil procurable—not too—full, in order to allow for the expansion of the oil, and then I “lit up” the incubator. First with a moderate flame until after the heater was warmed through, because a new wick will cause the flame to creep up, and if the wick is turned too high at first, the lamp is likely to smoke and accumulate soot on the burner. It will then burn with a large flame until the burner is overheated and a puff of gas blows it out. In case the burner becomes overheated so much as to blacken the metal, it should be scoured bright or replaced with a new one—and the heater drum should be cleaned out thoroughly. The chimney of heater wants to fit closely to the burner.

Looking After the Eggs

Before placing them in the machine, I allowed the eggs to settle for twenty-four hours and then put these precious eggs in with eggs from

other different varieties. I had decided to try out several different breeds before deciding upon any one. None of the eggs were left standing on end—all were lying flat in the incubator. Since that time I was away on the road a considerable part of the time, I drafted the services of my faithful servant to run the incubator during my absence.

Like all beginners, we were very much interested in the development from day to day, and I received frequent "bulletins," reaching me at various stops on my route.

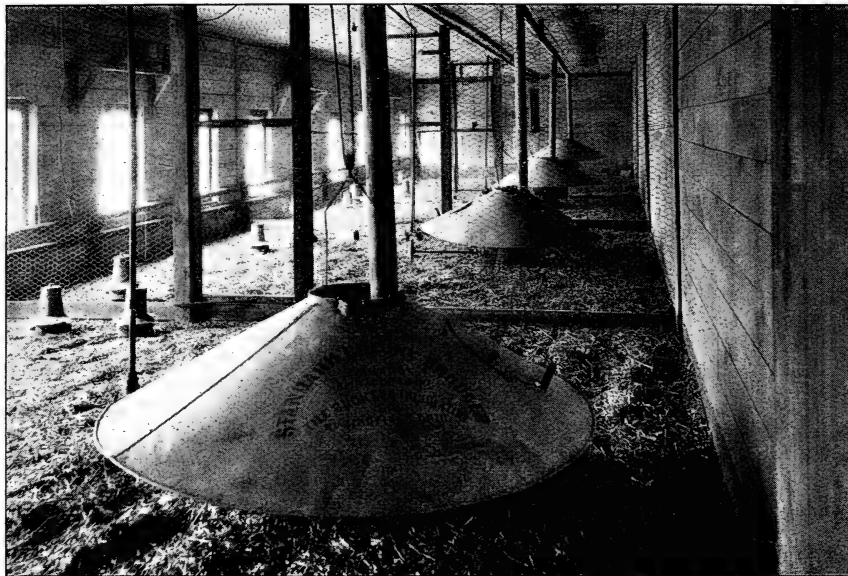
Well, at the end of the third day of this first hatch, the eggs received their first turning and the next morning were turned again and cooled for about ten minutes. The tendency was for the temperature to rise the third week, when the chick had commenced to throw off animal heat. By slight adjustment of the regulator, we had no trouble in keeping the desired temperature. It is very important to maintain as nearly uniform temperature as possible. Every day the lamp was filled and the wick trimmed. Eggs must never be piled on top of one another, but always laid flat in the incubator.

Much better results will be secured by operating the machine in the basement, because it is easier to maintain the necessary uniform temperature. If the basement or cellar is too dry, then place a pan of water under your machine to furnish sufficient moisture.

I have said something about cooling eggs. This is done by allowing the eggs to remain out of the machine until they are cooled. If the weather is severe and the room is cool, it will not take them long to reach the desired coolness. A good way to tell when they are sufficiently cooled off, is to place the eggs to the lid of your eye, and if they feel neither warm nor cold, they are at the proper temperature to return to the machine. This "eye lid" test is a good one!

This scheme was followed until the nineteenth day when the eggs began to pip. When we saw the first egg pip we closed the door and did not open it again until we saw the hatch was well over. The first week we ran the machine at a temperature of $102\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, and the second week 103 degrees. At the end of the third week the temperature went up to 104 degrees or a little more, but under no condition did we allow it to go above 105 degrees.

What causes the hatch to go over the twenty-first day? The machine has been run a little too cold or the eggs have been cooled a little too long. If the hatch comes off before the twenty-first day, it is because the lamp has been run with the blaze a little too high. At the end of the



Interior of a section of one of my brooder houses. This one building has a capacity of 10,000 chicks a season.

nineteenth day the eggs began to pip, so we realized that we had run the machine just about right. At the end of the twentieth day the chicks had begun to appear. At the end of the twenty-first day the hatch was completed and all of us were proud as peacocks and happy as newlyweds with the results. We had hatched eighty-nine lively little babies, and you may be sure it was difficult to conjure up a more fascinating picture!

By this time my brooder had arrived and it was made ready to receive the little folk. I planned to be home on Saturday and Sunday, and found a great deal of satisfaction in guiding the destinies of these little folk, keeping their brooder sweet and clean, and in raising them in the "nurture and admonition" of the plans that seemed most practical to me. We raised all but two of them. One died a natural death and the other was killed by accident.

After the first hatch was taken off, I reset the machine and hatched ninety chicks. It was then early in July. The weather had then become very warm, and they died off rapidly because I hadn't provided sufficient

shade to protect them from the hot July sun. I have since proved that midsummer chicks can be easily raised by furnishing them plenty of shade, fresh water, and keeping them in small flocks. We know this can be done even in the hot Southland because we have had experience in raising lots of mid-summer chicks on my Southern Branch Farm. Little chicks are very delicate birds. Too much chill or too much heat soon finishes them, but after they get real muscle in their little bodies and begin to harden up, they are much more thrifty and not so likely to be pounced upon by disease.

The Brooder and Its Care

We commenced to prepare the brooder for the chickens as soon as the eggs began to pip. Most all of the standard make brooders come in "knock-down"—form or in sections, with directions for putting them together. It only took an hour or two to assemble our brooder and get it ready for business. We were then ready to light the lamp and heat up the brooder, ready to receive its rioting, fluffy mob of lively infants.

Let me again emphasize the importance of using good oil in the brooder as well as the incubator. We trimmed the wick daily, as recommended by the manufacturer of the brooder, and started with a small flame. As the brooder got warm, the wick was turned up a little higher. By following this plan when the brooder is first started, there will be no chance to have any of the trouble I mentioned in connection with the incubator. Being human, I had a little trouble. This made me more careful because the job of cleaning the soot from the drum and pipe is not an agreeable one and it can be avoided with a little care. The drum and pipe must be kept clean.

Preparing It for Baby Chicks

While being heated, the brooder was placed level on level ground, and then banked up around the edge with earth to keep the wind from blowing under the bottom. I placed it facing the east so that the chicks could get the warm rays of the early morning sun. I next hung on the wall of the brooder, a hopper containing fine grit, charcoal and beef scrap. Then put about one-half inch of coarse lake sand on the brooder floor. The next day I had the temperature registering 95 degrees, which is about the right temperature for the brooder to receive the chicks. I ran it for a couple days before the chicks were ready to occupy it, so I would be sure we had the "hang" of the proposition all right and would be able

to keep up a uniform temperature, which, of course, must be regulated to a certain extent, with the warmth and brightness of the sun. When the sun is shining brightly, the wick can be turned down. Be sure to run a new brooder for a few days before putting chicks into it, in order to get it well regulated. This will save you the disappointment and expense of losing many baby chicks.

The first hatch came off largely on the twenty-first day, and as the weather was cold, I left them in the incubator another day to get thoroughly dried out. Later in the season, when the weather was warmer, they were removed to the brooder as soon as the hatch was well over, as the confinement seemed too close for little chicks when the weather was hot. They need fresh, dry and warm air—not too much moisture, no chill, no excessively hot weather.

Getting Ready to Receive Day-old Chicks

Millions of day-old chicks are now purchased from poultry specialists who reside at a distance from the purchasers. I would like to suggest certain preparations that ought to be made for the reception of these day-old chicks. On arrival the box in which they have been packed should be carefully opened in a room before a fire, if the weather is at all cold. It is absolutely necessary that the birds be kept warm and dry. If these babies are to be raised under a broody hen, the chickens should be kept warmly indoors until evening and then, after she has settled down, quietly introduce them to their new "mother." We suggest that a second broody hen should be kept in reserve in case the first one objects to raising an alien brood. I am taking it for granted that the hens have been carefully dusted with insect powder and are free from insects.

If it is decided to bring up the chicks in an artificial brooder, this can be cleaned and warmed to receive the baby chicks, just as I have discussed the matter in preceding paragraphs. About 90 degrees is a suitable heat for the sleeping chamber. See that there is plenty of good oil in the lamp and that the wick is burning clean and bright. Test the brooder thoroughly before the arrival of the baby chicks. There is absolutely no difficulty about working a brooder. It is very simple but the maker's instructions should be followed. On a warm spring day, when the sun is brightly shining, very little artificial heat will be required, but of course you have got to make sure that all is cozy and comfortable for the night, which may be chilly and damp.



CHAPTER IV

BABY CHICKS—SOME DO'S AND DON'T'S

How Mother Nature Planned Them



MOTHER NATURE has made very wonderful provision for the nurture of newly hatched baby chicks. They require no food for the first two days except the water with the chill taken off, when they are put into the brooder. Mother Nature has taken care of their wants by permitting the absorption of the yolk of the egg in their bodies. This is just why it is not only possible but easy to send day-old chicks by rail, or road, or steam, for long distances. I have shipped day-old chicks safely, more than two thousand miles but, usually, a forty-eight hour journey is ample for the young explorers. In order to break these long distance shipments of baby chicks and give the greatest satisfaction, I have established a branch farm in the far South, and at this writing am negotiating for one in the extreme West.

Don't Over-feed ,

I was amused to have a young man write to me that he had a good hatch but had lost a little chick. On examination he had found that it had swallowed the yolk of an egg, which had killed it. If the chicks are fed too soon, the yolk of an egg does not become absorbed in time, and

the natural result is just what it would be if a small child stuffed and gormandized with more food than he could take care of in his digestive tract—they droop and die.

What to Feed

It is perfectly natural to feel that the baby chicks ought to be fed. But don't be in a hurry about it. It is better to let them go without food a few hours too long than to feed them too soon. After the chicks had picked at the sand for a few hours, I placed clover chaff or chopped clover hay under the hover for bedding. I use this because if they eat any of it, it will not injure them. If you use sawdust or something similar, the chicks are apt to eat more or less of it before they distinguish between that and what they should eat, and they are liable to become "stuffed" with the wrong sort of material.

The gizzard of the chicken is its feed mill and ordinary coarse substances are required to grind the food, hence it encourages early vitality to furnish them with clean, coarse sand at once.

If the weather permits, I allow the chicks on the ground for an hour or two for the first time about the fifth day, or when they are six days old. If the weather is mild, they can remain out longer. In cold weather care should be taken to see that they can find their way back into the brooder, and not allow them to stand on the cold ground and get chilled through, which is likely to prove fatal or stunt their growth later. After they learn the way into the warm hover of the brooder they will run in whenever they get cold. If the weather is cold they should be tempered to the cold ground by degrees by allowing them to stay out longer each succeeding day for three or four days.

Brooders and Colony Houses

It is a good plan to keep the chicks in the brooder in the morning until the grass becomes dry. They should be given green food of some kind from the start. In case that green clover cannot be secured for them from the lawn, some sprouted oats will make a good substitute. On a subsequent page you will find directions for sprouting the oats. As the chickens grow older the flame can be turned down and the heat reduced by degrees. The second week 90 degrees is about right for them, the third week 85 to 90 degrees, and the fourth week 80 to 85 degrees. If the weather is warm they will commence to desert the hover when they are five or six weeks old and remain in the exercising room of the

brooder. During the early spring months give them 80 degrees until they are six or eight weeks old, and after they are ten or twelve weeks old the weather has moderated sufficiently to take them from the brooder and place them in a piano-box colony house that is described on page 36. I keep them in these houses until they are taken to their quarters. The cockerels are separated from the pullets when they are taken from the brooder. I have the parks containing these brooders plowed and cultivated every spring and sowed with rape seed. This produces a splendid green feed up until the snow flies, and it also makes a splendid shade. It furnishes them with lots of bugs and worms, which are generally found on such plants. At one end of the park I planted two or three dozen hills of sunflowers, which make excellent shade and give a crop of seeds. It is in here that they have their best times and flourish. When the cockerels are two or three pounds in weight I sell off the culls to the market and the balance are kept in these colony houses until the late fall, when they are taken to their winter quarters. After the pullets are four months old they are put in their winter quarters, in order that they will not be disturbed when they are getting ready to lay.

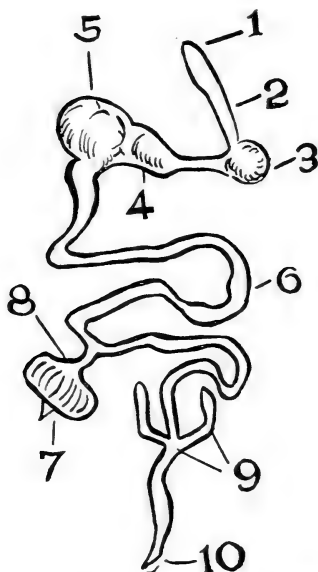
Making Baby Chicks Work

Take as one of your mottoes in feeding chickens that, "If they will not work, neither shall they eat." Teach them to work by feeding them in litter, so that they will have to scratch and dig around for what they eat, and keep this up as long as they live. On the third day I feed them hard-boiled eggs (boiled twenty minutes) mixed with bread crumbs thoroughly dried, or corn bread will make a good substitute. The coarsest ground oat meal obtainable is a very safe food for the first meal. It has been called a perfect chick food.

At the beginning it is a good plan to mix chick feed in lake or any other coarse sand. This will teach them industry and as they develop the muscles in their legs and bodies, naturally makes them stronger chicks.

Chick Physiology

Strange as it may seem, the little fellows thrive on sand and tiny bits of flint. The chicken has no teeth and never will have, and needs something hard, brittle and rough with which to grind its food to pulp when it reaches the gizzard—the "feed mill" of the chicken. The crop is simply a large pouch low down in the neck, into which the food is shovelled, awaiting the process of digestion. Shown herewith is a rough diagram of various parts of a chicken's anatomy. This will show pretty well how food travels on its way down the digestive tract.



(1) The mouth; (2) the throat, through which the food passes to (3) the crop, which is a storage tank where the food rests until the gizzard (5) is ready for it. Between the crop and gizzard, where the food is ground, there is an enlargement (4) called the stomach. At (6) is shown the small intestine, to which is fastened the unassimilated yolk (7). Through the little opening at (8) this yolk keeps passing into the intestine, where it is absorbed into the chick's system. Thus you will see that when food is given before the yolk is entirely assimilated you have food coming from two directions, each kind battling against the other. At (9), the caecum, or lower intestine, you will note two tube-like extensions. These are the places where worms may lodge, and are the seat of many bowel troubles with the older fowls. Over-feeding crams the caecum full, and this condition is generally indicated by a pasted-up vent (10).

I venture to say that fully 80 percent of the mortality in raising baby chicks is caused by improper feeding, and one of the most serious sources of danger is in the moistening of food. Dry food and then good, clean water, which lets the chick do the moistening for itself in the proper proportions, is the safest way. Nature has taught them what they require. We don't know. Of course baby chicks can be raised successfully with

wet mashes—but it certainly takes more care and to my way of thinking is not Nature's plan. Don't pamper and overly milk feed young chicks. Prepared foods containing powdered buttermilk are very beneficial.

How Often to Feed

For the first day or two, chicks should be fed every two or three hours. For the next week, four times daily is sufficient and then three times daily. Be very careful about not overfeeding. One of my greatest difficulties when I found it necessary to be absent on the road, was to find any one to feed the chicks without overfeeding. As I stated before, it is better to underfeed them than to overfeed, but there is not much danger of overfeeding when chick feed is mixed in the sand where they have to scratch and work for it. Watch and see that they have what they can eat up clean—and no more.



Cut of brooder made from a piano box.

After they are a week old a hopper should be placed before them containing beef scrap, bran, fine charcoal and grit, a hopper for each. After the chick is two or three months old, a few handfuls of wheat can be added to the chick feed, and the wheat can be increased by adding

more every week until they become accustomed to the whole grains. If cracked corn and kafir corn can be obtained, feed a mixture of three parts wheat, two parts cracked corn, and one part of kafir corn. This will make excellent growing feed for them until they are four months old, when any other grains may be added that can be secured in the market, such as buckwheat, oats, barley and any other grains that the chickens will eat. A good formula to go by is to use about 50 percent wheat where three kinds of grain are fed and 40 percent where more than three kinds are used. This grain is small, easily digested, and is rich in protein and mineral matter. Corn when fed alone has not enough protein and too much fat. Buckwheat and barley are also rich in fat. During the winter months corn ought to be fed in larger proportions and should constitute at least 50 percent of the feed during the cold weather.

Green Food

Green food should not be overlooked when chicks are small. In the very early spring sprouted oats make a splendid green feed for them. As soon as possible, sow a bed of oats, cover the top of it with one-inch poultry netting, which should be placed about six inches from the ground. The chicks will eat the tops off and they will grow up again. Take six-inch boards and stand them around the edge of the bed, driving sticks in the middle to keep the wire from sagging. The wire can be nailed on the top end of the board, which will make a good arrangement for this purpose.

The little fellows prefer this green feed to anything that you can furnish them, and it is always there for them to work on. By the time the oats are through growing the chicks will be large enough to eat any green feed that is supplied them.

As the chicks grow larger, it is important that they are furnished with plenty of charcoal and grit of a larger size than they required when they were smaller. The charcoal and grit can be secured in three sizes—one size for the baby chick, a medium size for the growing chick, and a large size for the matured fowl. Their winter quarters should be provided with a hopper containing bran, beef scrap, oyster shell, grit and charcoal, a section for each. During the winter months, when the hens are confined, they should be fed green bone, about three pounds to a hundred hens per day. Skimmed milk, curdled thick, makes a good substitute for green bone. I get splendid results without feeding mashes. But mashes are good if not too wet. A mash moistened with milk makes fine feed for hens. To insure the proper amount of exercise during the winter months, it is best to put the grains in litter and compel the hens to scratch

for them. Green food must not be overlooked. When it is not convenient to feed sprouted oats, alfalfa meal, cabbage or mangels are splendid.

Sprouted Oats

Sprouted oats is the best green feed obtainable, and makes a good cheap feed and is a great egg producer. The fowls are fond of it. Feed at noon as much as they will eat up clean. To prepare, take a pail half full of oats, soak in water for about one day, drain water, and empty into a box with half inch holes bored in the bottom. Sprinkle night and morning with warm water. When oats commence to sprout, spread them out into other boxes two inches thick, and sprinkle twice daily with warm water. Keep oats well stirred each time they are sprinkled, and in about a week or so they will have sprouted. The length of sprout will depend on the temperature of the room. When sprouts are two inches long, commence to feed to the hens, and by the time the sprouts are four to five inches long you will have them all fed, and in the meantime have another lot ready to feed.

Winter Quarters

You will bear in mind that the most perfect winter quarters are those that have conditions nearest to summer. I do not mean that the temperature shall be as warm as summer, but to have other conditions as near like what your fowls are accustomed to in the summer as practical. The sprouted oats, a generous box of gravel, plenty of dust in their box, clean quarters, fresh air, and no drafts can be had with little expense and trouble, and will make conditions summerlike to them to a large extent. If it is convenient, throw a basketful of old plaster in one corner, and it will be surprising the amount of this they will consume, and it is good for them, as the lime is needed for them in the formation of the egg shell. This will make a good substitute for oyster shell.

Automatic Feeders

The automatic feeders are a fine thing for growing stock or breeders in the summer time. When the flocks are confined to their winter quarters I would much prefer to feed in litter. The chickens must be kept active to get the best results, and I find the best way to keep them active is to keep them working in a good supply of litter on the floor. Hopper feeding is all right to a certain extent. The mineral matter, such as oyster shell, grit, animal matter such as beef scrap, and a dry mash may

be fed them in this manner. Keeping the fowls supplied with a dried mash in the hopper insures them always having enough to eat. In case they are not fed sufficiently in the litter they will finish their meal at the hopper. If the chickens are always ready for you when you enter the pen with the feed pail you will know that they are not being overfed. If they are hungry they will flock around as soon as you enter. If they are indifferent when you go in you will know that they are being overfed. So it is time to cut down on their rations.

Piano Box Colony House

In another chapter I discussed incubators and brooders, but perhaps while I am talking over with you your baby chicks, you'd be interested in my experience with a home-made colony house—many of which I still use. After the hatches came off, the fluffy babies were transferred to the brooder—and it is remarkable to see how they thrive and grow. They are always anxious to get out and when the robins return bringing spring with them, I let the growing youngsters into their sunflower parks.

The beautiful days of May come all too soon—and chicks grow splendidly. They are now large enough so that sexes may be separated. A colony house made from a piano box such as will be found illustrated on page 33 will make a comfortable and economical quarters for growing stock. I removed the bottom of the box, then placed two pieces of 2x6 under the box, sawed off the corners next to the ground, which will make it easy to move. These pieces are placed about twelve inches from the outer edge of the box and the floor nailed to them. I placed a few bricks under them so that the box can be raised high enough to afford the chickens splendid shelter on rainy days. I placed the box on a high spot so that the ground was dry under it, as the chicks prefer to go under the box rather than go inside during the daytime in case of any rough weather. After I had the runners secured I next divided the front, which was the bottom of the box and is now open, by nailing a 2x4 between the bottom and the top at the front edge. Next I nailed a 2x4 of the same length against each side, on the inside flush with the front. This served to hang the doors on. I made the doors out of 1x2 and covered with one-inch mesh. If you are likely to be troubled with weasles it would be a good idea to tack wire cloth on the frames instead of one-inch poultry netting. This wire cloth can be secured any width and as fine as you wish. The half-inch hardware cloth is sufficiently fine. These doors answered the purpose very nicely until the weather became a little cool in the fall, when I tacked muslin over the wire. After the doors were on I covered the top of the box with roofing paper, stopped all

the cracks so that there was no draft, and next put in the roosts. These I placed about ten inches apart, and there was room for three or four of them. These boxes make splendid quarters for the growing stock and will be a good place for them until the weather gets cold in the Fall or until they are ready to be taken to their Winter quarters.

The colony houses can be placed in the parks or in an open field. A cornfield makes an ideal location on account of the shade and the ground being tilled frequently, giving the chickens lots of loose earth to work in and a chance to get earthworms. I used two parks for the colony houses, one for the males and one for the females. In May I found the chicks growing nicely, and those of the large males that did not promise to make good breeders I sold for broilers.

Care should be taken not to force the breeders during the breeding season or any other time. The breeding pen should not be fed wet mash, because this has a tendency to produce the fatal white diarrhoea in the chick. In case that the eggs are not as fertile as they should be, it will be found that the male is so gallant that he defers eating until the females have the feed consumed. In such cases as this it is necessary to feed the male by himself once or twice a day for a while, and every other day he should be supplied with a little ground raw lean beef.





CHAPTER V

GETTING THE EGGS

Importance of Male Bird



IN my former edition of this book I made the statement "The male is half the pen and should be a bird of good type." I feel satisfied in my own mind, after recent experiments, that the male bird is more nearly seven-eighths of the pen. The hen is a factor—but by no means the dominant one. If a breeder mates a hen of great laying capacity with a cockerel whose parents were moderate egg producers, the chances are that the "kin" will take after the male, and also

be moderate egg layers. If a hen of moderate egg-laying capacity be mated with a cockerel whose parents held a high record, the chances are the progeny will also take a high place in egg production.

Admittedly the greatest profit from hens is in the eggs—and particularly winter eggs. It costs a certain amount to feed and care for a pullet until it reaches the laying age. And then there is a constant monthly "overhead" and feeding expense, all of which must be figured, and for which the hen must be made to pay before she produces a profit for the owner. It is important, therefore, to bear in mind the necessity of getting male birds from a prolific egg-laying strain. If you want more eggs, one of the cheapest and most effective ways to secure them is to buy best cockerel possible instead of purchasing an entire flock of pedigree hens and then mating them with a second-rate male bird. You get practically all the inherited ability to lay, transmitted by the cockerel.

When Superb Vitality Counts

In my last catalog and in other advertising which I have recently published, I have emphasized—somewhat to the surprise of many of my business friends—the idea of superb and supreme vitality. I even went so far as to show a photograph of one of my birds making a “20 yard dash” across one of the yards. I will not tolerate a droopy slacker hen or cockerel—and at the present time we very seldom have to contend with such birds. When they appear, and imperfections are discovered, the cockerels are fattened for broilers and soon killed.



Diagrammatic Comparison

If you will compare the two diagrams, you will observe the alert, sprightly, vigorous carriage of the parallelogram shaped body and the

weak, supine aspect of the triangular shaped body. Keep away from birds with triangular shaped bodies. Select cockerels with plenty of pep and fight, with glossy feathers and well developed, large heads, with well formed combs of brilliant color, strong, prominent eyes, proud appearance, full, deep breast, well rounded abdomen, powerful legs, set quite far apart, a broad, strong back—and a fellow who has a loud, clear crow to welcome the rising sun.

Specifications of an Ideal Male

In my selection of the ideal Ancona male, I would look for the following points: I'd pick out a fellow with a long back, slightly sloping downward to the tail, with no apparent angle at the tail. His tail should be carried at an angle of 40 degrees, but don't be afraid of the tail being too low. The head, and especially the comb, should be as near perfect as possible. The comb is the first thing that is noticed in a bird and is naturally very prominent. It should have five serrations; three or four is no serious objection, because the tendency is for the points to increase in number. The comb should stand erect, the blade continuing a flowing curve upward from the line of head, free from all side spriggs. Do not use a male too light in color. He should be dark, with as little white in his wings and tail as possible. The shanks should be yellow, or yellow mottled with black. Females of good shape, with a long body, with the tail carried at an angle of about 35 degrees, good head points, comb of good size with five serrations or less, free from side spriggs and folds, well mottled, with as few white feathers in the tail and wings as possible. The shanks should be yellow, or yellow mottled with black. If the male bird has a solid yellow shank, the female may have a little more black on the shank. A combination such as this will give you splendid results. If the male bird is very dark the female birds may have more white. By mating them for a season or two you can determine what results you will get from light or dark colored birds. The tendency is to breed lighter, so it is a good fault to breed the birds dark.

The Rose Comb Ancona may be mated the same as the Single Comb, excepting the comb. The principal point to note is to see that the male bird is strong in the points where the females are weak. If the male bird has not a good spike on his comb, care should be taken to secure females that are strong on this point.

Breeding pens to get best results, should not have over fifteen females. I have seen twenty females mated to a good vigorous male with splendid results, but this is unusual.

Put the right kind of a cockerel with second grade birds, and you are much more likely to secure a generous supply of eggs, than if you put a second grade cockerel with an entire flock of pedigreed hens.

Housing for Egg Production

When you have secured your pullets with the inherited tendency to lay large numbers of eggs, you have only begun. These pullets have to be carefully tended until they reach the creative stage and then they must receive the treatment that will bring the egg-laying tendency to its finest fruition and this means proper housing and proper feeding. Keep the ground free from taint and open to the action of the air and sun. Keep the houses scrupulously clean and nest-boxes inviting with fresh hay or straw. These things matter very much!

Feeding for Egg Production

There certainly is no mystery about the problem of feeding the right sort of food in the proper proportions to encourage heavy egg yield. The ratio of albuminoids to carbohydrates should be as one in five. The albuminoids make flesh—eggs! Carbohydrates supply the heating energy. One way of working out the question in terms of food is as follows:—One pound bran, one middlings, one maize meal, one fish meal and one half clover meal. One of soya-bean meal may be added when not too expensive. As I have said, these meals may be given moistened with warm water or fed dry, just as they are, but in that case the dry mixture must be fed out of a specially constructed box called a hopper.

Green bone, fresh from the butcher's, as a part of the food—say one-third—on every alternate day, encourages pullets to lay quickly—but be careful about "forcing" the bird. Sprouted oats or sprouted wheat are economical feeds and excellent aids to hen fruit.

Next in importance to food for egg-yield, is the supply of water. Without water there would be no egg and no fowl. Don't keep hens waiting one moment to drink! If the hen has to wait a long time, the potential egg may vanish and where two eggs would have been laid, with ample liquid available, only one will materialize. Keep plenty of fresh, clean water before your hens.

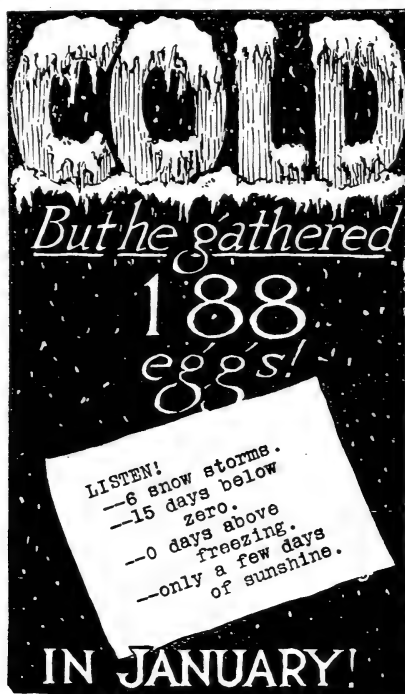
Four important reasons why a constant supply of fresh water should be kept before laying hens, are as follows:

- 1—Water is used to soften food for digestion.
- 2—Water, in the form of blood, acts as a common carrier and keeps the body vigorous.
- 3—Water constitutes about 75 percent of the egg.
- 4—Water is very important in equalizing the temperature of the hen's body.

Some Egg Facts

The demand for eggs has always been, and probably always will be, ahead of the supply. An egg is something that can be marketed on either a modest or large scale, but *always* marketed. It is never a drug on the market.

The word "egg" comes from the Anglo-Saxon *oeg*. Chaucer and other early writers use the forms *ey*, *eg*, *egge*. It was really surprising to me to find how many expressions and products got their name directly



*With good birds you, too, can do this
or better*

from the egg. For instance, the first watches ever made were egg-shaped and were sometimes called "animated eggs." The finest artists have used delicately tinted birds' eggs as color models—the exquisite shades painted by Nature on these shells being matchless in harmony.

It was interesting for me to learn that our ocean transports carrying our men to France, carry approximately 25,000 eggs each trip. France has always been a great country for eggs, and before the war, in Paris, they figured to allow each person 180 eggs a year.

A great many people think that eggs are good for the voice. Egg and lemon juice beaten together are recommended for hoarseness. Charles II of England presented a favorite singer with a silver egg filled with guineas, wittily remarking, "Take this; I am told that eggs are good for the voice."

I could sit here and talk for an hour on the romance of what we call "a common hen's egg"—I could call your attention to the Jewish people who taboo pork but are a remarkably healthy race. As a people they make great use of eggs—even the poorest giving them preference over other foods. A man once said that *if, for every pig kept by private families, a flock of hens were substituted, there would be less patent medicine required and a general improvement in health.* If you will stop to think of it, you will realize that fewer individuals show an antipathy for eggs than for most foods—in fact no honest appetite rejects them.

Right here it might not be out of place for us to give consideration to the food value and chemistry of the eggs. I am showing a sketch of a typical Ancona egg. The "Famous" Ancona egg will weigh two ounces or slightly under that. Standard authorities give the following proportions of chemical elements in the dry substance of the average hen's egg:

Carbon	53% to 55%
Nitrogen	15% to 16%
Hydrogen	7%
Oxygen	21% to 22%
Sulphur	1% to 2%
Phosphorus	5%

Eggs are splendid food for trained workers. Ericsson, the inventor, labored at least twelve hours out of twenty-four to a ripe old age; his breakfast for every day of the year was two poached eggs. Weston, the pedestrian, while walking one hundred miles in twenty-two hours, consumed from sixteen to twenty raw eggs.

Contrary to the thought which prevailed years ago, eggs are easily digested—more so than meat and most vegetables. Not only are eggs good mental food, but they sustain the body as well. They are about eighty-two calories in each Ancona egg. So much about eggs.

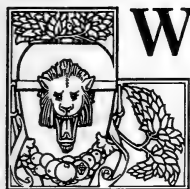


My first chicken house, which was built at a cost of \$400. Will accommodate about 200 fowls. This is a serious mistake a beginner usually makes in putting up too expensive buildings. The laying houses I now use on my farm are more desirable, because they are more comfortable for the chickens and can be built for about one-half the cost.

CHAPTER VI

POULTRY HOUSES

Building for Egg Production—for Warmth



WHAT constitutes a successful poultry house? I should say one that keeps the bird in perfect comfort and health, and enables them to produce the largest yield of eggs. Of course you don't get eggs from poultry houses—but if you take the same identical birds and put them in one house and then change them to another there may be a decided difference in the egg yield just because of the conditions provided by the "fowl" dwelling.

I am certain that a light and airy house will encourage egg laying and that a dark, stuffy house absolutely will not. The three big factors in egg production are:

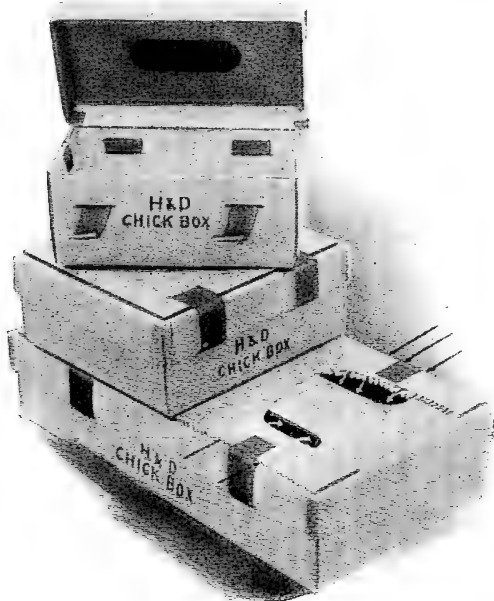
- 1—food
- 2—light
- 3—air

Specifications for Economical Houses

An open air poultry house is recognized by practically all prominent poultry men to be the most satisfactory for laying flocks. On page 60 will be found an illustration of the type of laying houses used on my farm. This building is 322 feet long and can be built any length desired. It is 20 feet deep. If the house is more than 8 feet deep, it would be a good plan to locate windows at the back of the house as well as at the front. One-quarter of the front of this long house for laying flocks, is open and the opening is covered with one-inch poultry netting on the outside. Frames are covered with a medium grade cotton and operated from the inside so that the attendant can raise and lower them and leave as much as desired. During the fine weather these spaces are left entirely open. During the cold weather, when the thermometer registers from zero to 20 degrees and below, the curtains are kept down all the way. These curtains of cotton also keep out rain, snow and strong wind.

A glass window every 12 feet, lets in light in case of stormy weather when the curtains are kept down. There are very few days that the curtain cannot be raised, and I find it makes a very practical house. The

foundation is made of cement and runs below the ground level eighteen inches, and is fifteen inches above. This stops all drafts and makes a comfortable place for the birds. For the first two or three years I would recommend the earth floor. After that it would be necessary to replace the earth with fresh dirt or put in a wood or cement floor. The roof is made of a good grade of paper roofing, the sides are built of double V siding and lined with tar paper on the inside. The partitions are 12 feet apart, and every fourth section is built solid of boards, air-tight. This



Group of day-old chick shipping cases

stops all drafts. Like all other poultry buildings, the laying house should face the south. The front of the building is 8 feet in height over the foundation, and the back of the building is 4 feet high. The dropping-boards are put in against the back wall and run the full length of the building. They are about 3 feet from the ground. Cotton curtains are placed in front of the roosts to protect the fowls in extreme weather.

The studding is put in twenty-two inches apart. A door is placed in the middle of each pen, the width of the studding and the height of the opening. This door is made of one-by-two strips and covered with one-

inch mesh. It is fastened from the inside to prevent anyone from entering the building, and is used for the chickens to go in and out, and also by the attendant for taking the litter in and out.

It will be found that in such buildings as these, healthy, vigorous and happy stock will be raised. I have stood across the fields fifteen hundred feet distant from the houses in the dead of Winter, in zero weather, and could hear my birds singing their merry song as in the good old Summer time. The important features or the most valuable assets the modern poultry house can have are plenty of light and fresh air; and the open front is the one that fills the bill.

The chicken parks should be as generous as the ground will permit. The ideal park would have a southern exposure. It is a good plan to plant fruit trees in the parks, and these will furnish the chickens with shade as well as the table with lots of fruit. The parks should be cultivated often in the early Spring. If the parks are long enough it is well to fence off the part farthest from the laying house and sow it with rape. This not only furnishes the chickens with an excellent green food, but also keeps the ground sweet and fresh. It is important to have the parks built on high ground as well as the houses. In case the high ground cannot be secured, be sure that the parks are well drained, because the chickens will not do well where they have to stay in parks that are wet for several days after every rainstorm.

Do not overlook the necessity of keeping the poultry houses clean, and especially the brooder. The brooder should be cleaned nearly every two or three days, and sprayed well with some strong disinfectant. This will keep them free from insects and keep the air pure. The litter should be changed often. After the chicks are a month old it will be found easier to clean the brooder or colony houses by throwing in some fine earth. This will prevent anything from sticking to the floors. After they are three or four months old the roost may be put in the colony houses, and by keeping in a fair supply of dirt it will not be necessary to clean them more than twice a week, as the earth absorbs the strong odors. The laying houses should be sprayed once a month during the winter season. The roosts should be painted with some good disinfectant every week. A mixture of slack lime and crude carbolic acid will make protection against vermin and diseases, but as the lime will affect the color of the legs, spraying will be found more satisfactory where show birds are being raised.

Water Tight, Well Ventilated, Well Lighted

Success in poultry, although working hand in hand with good houses, has really nothing to do with a special design of house. Many of the most successful and largest egg farmers in the country have houses made on the open front principle, which differ only in detail, and if these are good enough for successful men who specialize on egg production, they surely are good enough for the amateur or back-yarder or owner of a small family flock. A good house need not be expensive. Just keep the four principles in mind in planning and building a poultry house.

- 1—Have it water tight.
- 2—Have it well ventilated.
- 3—Have it well lighted.
- 4—Have it free from drafts.

Possessing those four points, it really doesn't matter how inexpensive your house is, just so it provides healthy accommodations for the number of birds you have.



CHAPTER VII

MAKING SHIPMENTS

January Inquiries



THE last part of January, of the first year I did advertising worth while, my breeding pens were made up and the mating list and catalog all ready to be distributed. In compiling the circular or catalog, it is a good plan to give a history and description of the breed so as to create confidence in their good points.

Before January was over, inquiries were coming in for eggs and baby chicks. I had about the same experience with these inquiries that I had with the inquiries for stock in the early fall. I found that the mail had become quite heavy, and much of the time was occupied answering correspondence. Before February was far advanced, some orders for baby chicks and hatching eggs had been received. My incubators were set and the brooders ready.

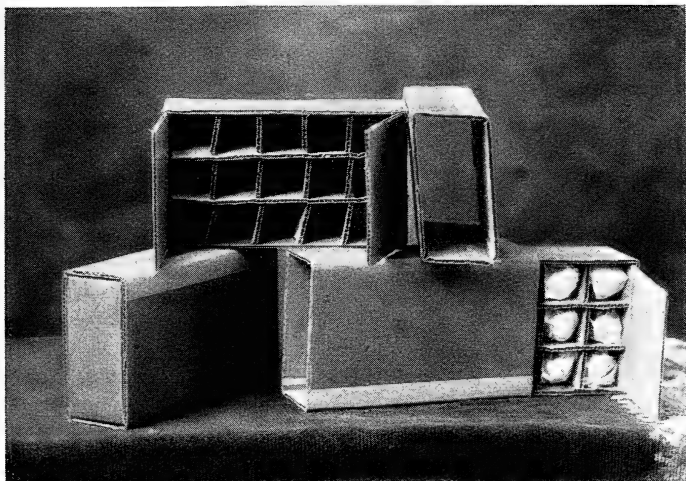
Boxing and Shipping Eggs

The time was due for the first shipment of eggs, and it was important to know how to pack them. There are many different ways, and different breeders are indorsing different plans. The easiest way to ship, and one of the cheapest, is by the use of the egg boxes manufactured by box companies. On page 51 is one of these boxes illustrated. All that is necessary is to wrap the eggs in paper and place in the section for each egg. Scatter a little bran or chaff over them. Seal the box and it is ready to go. This will do for a short haul. But if it is going far I would put the box in a basket and tie to the handle so it will not be tossed out. A little excelsior or straw placed in the bottom of the basket will be a great protection against any careless handling at the hands of the express company. These boxes are more desirable for single settings. I found round bushel baskets satisfactory for shipping fifty or more eggs. When orders ran up to a thousand or more these baskets are just the thing. Each basket will hold one hundred eggs. In extreme weather I line these baskets with paper. I wrap each egg in paper before placing it in the basket. The bushel basket should be well lined with straw by distributing it around the side and bottom of the basket about two inches thick to

make a good cushion in the bottom of it so that the eggs will not break. After the straw is nicely arranged in the basket, I start the first layer by placing the eggs with small end down. This is the best way for the eggs to lie, because it will stand shipment better than if placed on the side. After the first layer is placed I scatter a little fine chaff or a little fine cut straw over the eggs, then put paper on the top before placing the next layer of eggs. This paper prevents the chaff from working from the top layer down to the bottom. On top of the second layer I again place the chaff or fine cut straw, and always place the paper between each layer. I do not put the eggs too close to the top of the cover. Room should be allowed for straw between the eggs and the cover. In former years I have used excelsior for lining the baskets, but find straw more satisfactory, as it will keep out more cold and be a better protection for the eggs. On page 46 will be found the picture of a shipment of these baskets already packed. The covers are fastened on with basket hooks.

Shipping Baby Chicks

The first shipment of baby chicks was due to go early in March. The first hatch was off just in time for the first order. It was the first experience in shipping baby chicks, and I was naturally puzzled as to how to do it. Have received many letters from different ones asking me for instructions in shipping stock, eggs and baby chicks, so I am safe in saying that these are matters that bother everyone. On page 46 you will find illustrated a box for shipping baby chicks. This is a remarkable and splendid device for this purpose. It is not only warm and protects the chicks against the cold, but also is very strong and has a wonderful resistance against hard usage. These boxes are made in three different sizes. The smallest size will accommodate twelve to twenty-five chicks, the next size will hold fifty, and the largest size will hold one hundred. The fact that nature has made provision for the baby chicks to live without food for the first three days of their existence makes it practical to send these little beauties hundreds of miles with splendid results. I have shipped them as far as three thousand miles, but do not recommend shipping quite so far. I ship the chicks just as soon as they have become dry and their down has become fluffy.



This illustrates the boxes I use for shipping hatching eggs. The one on top is ready to receive the eggs. The one on the right is packed with eggs and the cover partly on. The box on the left is ready for shipment, and contains 15 eggs.

Shipping Stock

On page 67 is illustrated a shipping box such as I use for the birds. This kind of a box is very desirable because it is light and makes a splendid advertisement for your business.

These shipping boxes I make in three sizes—No. 1 for a single bird, No. 2 for a trio, and No. 3 for a pen of five to eight. The No. 1 size is ten inches wide, nineteen inches long and eighteen inches high; No. 2 is fifteen inches wide, twenty-four inches long and eighteen inches high; No. 3 is twenty inches wide, twenty-four inches long and eighteen inches high. The ends and bottom should be made out of white pine or poplar, and the sides out of extra heavy and extra strong strawboard. The slats across the top are two inches wide and should be put on about two inches apart. These boxes can be bought with bottom and ends cleated ready to nail together, including slats and heavy cardboard sides, at forty cents for size No. 1, fifty cents for size No. 2, and sixty cents for size No. 3.

During the warm summer and fall months the fowls should be provided with water in transit. This is done by fastening a tin can to the inside of the box. In the cooler days of the fall and winter the water will not be necessary if the birds will be delivered within two or three days. A good substitute for water is to place a few apples in the box with them and thus eliminate the danger of birds having wet straw in their box by the water splashing from their drinking can. Where the birds are on the way for over the third day, they should be provided with water. In the fall of the year, as the weather becomes colder, it is a good plan to tack muslin on the top of the box to prevent them from getting their combs frosted or getting in a draft at some transfer point. A space about two inches wide should be left for the express company to water them.





A shipment of Sheppard's stock ready to start on the long trip of 12,000 miles to far away Australia.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FOUR SALES ESSENTIALS



IF four times as many people as are now selling poultry and eggs, even on a small scale, were to start advertising and selling their eggs and poultry, the demand still would not be supplied.

I am going to give you the result of my experience right straight through, even on the sales end, so that with the facts I put into this book, you will have the required information not only to successfully produce poultry and the eggs, but also to market these economically.

Let me discuss briefly "Salesmanship of Poultry." This consists primarily of advertising because poultry and eggs must be sold chiefly by mail. There are four sales essentials:

- 1—Cause the reader to Look at your advertisement.
- 2—Put him in a favorable attitude toward your message.
- 3—Persuade him to Learn about your poultry or service.
- 4—"Land" his business.

These four sales essentials can be briefly expressed in the four words, "Look, Like, Learn and Land."

Every letter, every circular, every mating list, every catalog, every poultry paper or newspaper advertisement, every envelope "stuffer" or printed matter sent out on your poultry and eggs, in order to be most successful, should be planned with these four essentials in mind.

Make Them "Look"

On the opposite page you will find a group of my advertisements. Suppose we take a couple of these and analyze them. Take the pair of ads, "Boy Scouts" and "You will." First, our job is to make the reader of the poultry papers in which these appear, *look* at the advertisement—stop, look and listen. We have got to do something to flag his or her attention. Not necessarily to startle them, because sometimes when people are startled, a reaction takes place in their mind, which causes them to dislike what you have to say. Be careful about not creating antagonism. Do not have your headings or pictures negative or disagreeable in effect. Like poultry, they should be live, energetic and forceful.

Make Them Like

The picture of the Boy Scout with the word "Boy" and the picture of the hand with the word "You," catch the eye, cause the reader to look. Who doesn't like a husky Boy Scout? This pleasure is reflected on the message found down in the advertising copy. We believe that the average person will at once agree that "You don't enjoy a losing game." Thus, you see we have caused the readers both to look and like.

They may not respond to our advertisement this time, but the next time they see a Sheppard message, they are going to be favorably disposed toward it and not antagonistic. People don't understand their own frames of mind. It doesn't require any definite, disagreeable thing to set edgewise against your proposition. Just make a few "bad breaks" with your advertising copy or your form letters, and people will avoid you like the plague. They quit cold. You won't understand why and they won't understand why. So in writing your advertising copy, it wants to be just as happy and harmonious with the frame of mind of the reader as possible.

Make Them Learn

Now how will we cause them to "Learn"? In each piece of copy I plan to tell them just enough so that a strong desire will be aroused to

learn more. I hold back all the information and try to get them interested to write for my catalog or one of my books. If you will get a reading glass you will be able to study out some of this copy and you will see that I touch upon, briefly, in each advertisement:

1—Egg-laying ability.

2—Prize-winning.

3—Appeal to beauty.

so that these three important points are covered in some way in each advertisement. The big thing, after all, of course, is to get the name of the prospect on the "line with dots." Until you get the order, and the check or money order as well, nothing has been closed and the proof of the value of your salesmanship in advertising depends upon the cash you receive for the stock, the day-old chicks or the eggs for hatching you may offer.

The operating of commercial egg plant and the selling of eggs for home use, is another business entirely, which I will not here discuss. I am endeavoring to make it somewhat easier and less expensive for you to sell your stock, your day-old chicks and your eggs for hatching.

Landing Them—How to Do It—A Dozen and One Sales Pointers

Now, how shall we "land" the prospect who has already sufficiently interested himself in our proposition to write for information and learn more about our stock? We have got to bring this message to him so interestingly, so emphatically and so truthfully, that his confidence will be inspired to the point where he will feel that we are just the ones who should receive his order. Use plenty of photographs, good pictures taken of your own birds to illustrate your printed matter. It helps to show the picture of the person who is offering the stock—unless he looks like a second-story worker. I believe it pays, once in a while, to call in an advertising man to help you get ideas regarding your headings and to assist you in making your advertising as interesting and readable as possible—but a still better plan is to have some characteristic style, either your own writing or the writing of someone who is a good friend of yours, used in all of these advertising pieces so that they will have personality. Don't forget that when the prospects write for information they want information. Give them the plain facts and plenty of them. Tell them the whole story just so far as you can.

CHAPTER IX

ADVERTISING TO SUCCESS

Visiting the Shows



EARLY in my experience I found one of my best advertisements was showing my birds at both large and small shows. But this would have been a poor advertisement had I not won a major portion of the prizes in the particular class or classes I entered.

At one of the first shows I visited I remember my experience. I was showing King William I, a handsome cockerel who had won first at the great Dairy Show, London, England, and was naturally proud of him. A man admired him very much and asked my price. I told him one thousand dollars. It was fortunate for me that he did not buy him, because he has been the foundation of my flock and he has been worth not less than ten thousand dollars to me. It does not pay to sell your best stock. I never price my best birds. They are always to be found in my breeding pen. By doing this I have been able to keep improving my flock, and when my customers want eggs from prize winners they get them.

Building Good Records

I first built up a good record before I commenced to get out any printed advertising other than mere announcements of the stock I had for sale. It is one thing to simply list what you have to sell and another thing to write this up so interestingly and appealingly that people will be persuaded to purchase it, even if they had not intended to before reading the copy.

I had reached the time when I wished to burn into the mind of the buying public the merits of my chickens. In preparing my advertising I eliminated every unnecessary detail and made the essential facts as interesting as possible. I found that concentrated, consistent endeavor brings results.

Continuity in advertising is the greatest essential of success.

Jacob's Follow-Up

Jacob once cranked up his dromedaries and set out from Padanaram with his wives, kiddies and live stock. An authentic report reached him that Brother Esau, the owner of a large Grouch, because of a certain



"Busy Days" Among the Colony Houses on Sheppard's Famous Farm

swiped birth-right, was roaring to meet him with a bunch of fighters. Jacob then started to "sell" himself to his wild-eyed kin. He set apart live stock for a gift. But he didn't hand it to Esau all at once. No, no. He divided it into six or nine groups and "put a space betwixt drove and drove." He was after a series of favorable impressions. He even went so far as to halve his own family and possessions—put a space between the halves—and join himself to the rear caravan. Saving his heaviest shot for the last. If all this isn't safe and sane advertising psychology, then what is it?

You have to keep after people time after time, sometimes it's the last letter that gets the big order. The same follow-up idea applies to using papers. If you haven't very much capital, pick out one good paper and stay in it every month. Don't drop out unless it demonstrates that it is not pulling business for you. If it is, stay in and gradually add to your list. It's the tap, tap, tap of the advertising hammer that counts.

Advertising Pays

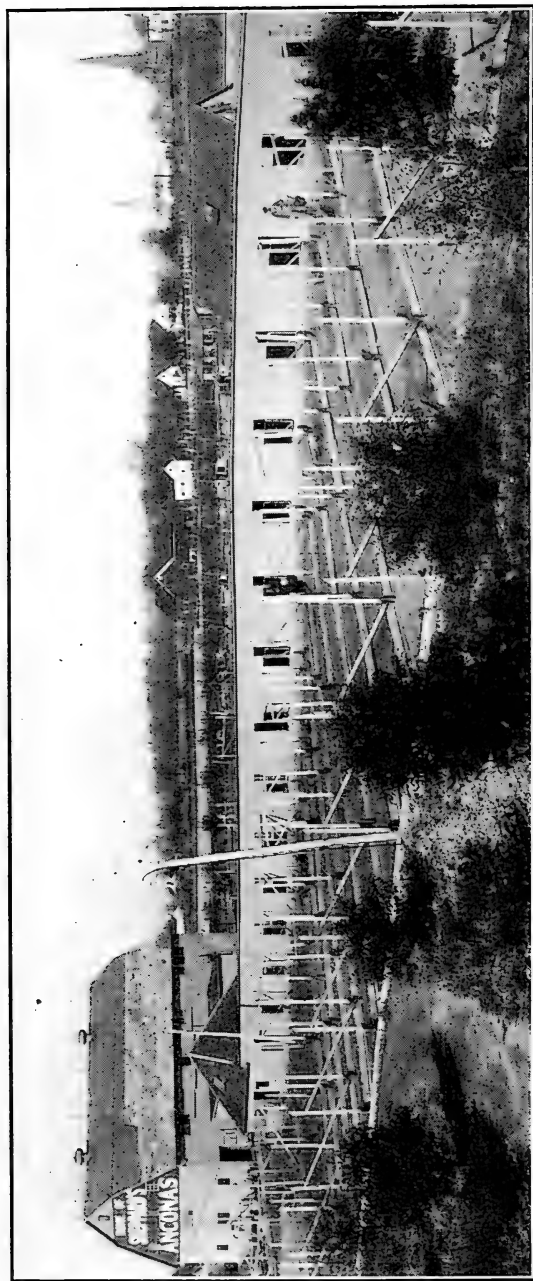
I found advertising paid well, although I did not get big returns the first year. The second year I advertised more and was pleased to note that the returns increased in proportion to the extent I advertised. Each year I spent more money for advertising, and have always found the returns justified it. I want to impress upon you the importance of advertising. "It pays to advertise." This is a hackneyed expression, but nevertheless it is true. It pays to advertise generously. Don't be afraid to spend a few dollars advertising in the poultry journals. The money will come back and a great deal more with it. Do you know a successful poultry man or a successful business man who has not been a generous advertiser? I was not advertising long before I was shipping stock to Europe, Africa, and the remotest parts of the earth. My advice is, first, get good stock; second, advertise it; third, give your customers a square deal, and you will succeed. Don't become discouraged in case you run across a customer occasionally that you cannot please, no matter how hard you try. You will have such experience, no matter what your business is. I discovered that long before I went into the chicken business.

An Unpleasant Experience

There were some things in my advertising experience that were not always pleasant. For instance, I started my advertising by using classified space in a couple poultry journals. I want to say that I was very much disgusted and disgruntled with the first results, because I was getting more letters from people who wanted to sell me more advertising or something else, than inquiries from prospective buyers. But I kept at it and it wasn't long before inquiries for stock and eggs were numerous. Then I got up my first circular, which was a little 6x9 pamphlet, illustrating it with some cuts of my birds, hatching eggs and stock. I started with two pens—No. 1 at five dollars per setting and No. 2 at two dollars per setting of fifteen eggs. I mailed my circular in answer to every inquiry, and did not fail to write a short letter in answer to each inquiry, which read as follows. "Here's the circular illustrating and describing the birds regarding which you made inquiry a few days ago. They're great layers, and I very much hope that you will carefully study this circular and then permit me to demonstrate their worth." To send a short personal letter with these circulars in a sealed envelope with a two-cent stamp, will be found to pay.

The First Orders

I soon received my first order for hatching eggs. The next thing I was up against was to know the best way to pack them. After investigating



One of the types of Laying Houses used on the Sheppard Farm

the matter I was informed that the basket was considered good. I secured a supply of baskets and after wrapping the eggs carefully in paper I packed them in a basket with excelsior and sewed a cloth over the top. I gave you my later experience in packing and shippings of eggs on a preceding page.

Increasing My Advertising

After the first year's advertising, the poultry business looked very good to me—it seemed to have possibilities for the future, so I decided to do still more advertising the following year. By this time I had stock to sell in the fall and hatching eggs in the spring, besides lots of eggs for the market after supplying an abundance for our domestic use. With the increased advertising came the increased amount of business. I commenced my advertising in September. Inquiries commenced to come shortly after, and it was not long before I was getting orders for stock, and as the season advanced the orders became more numerous. It wasn't long before I had sold all the surplus stock. I continued my advertising through the Winter and Spring for the hatching season. After my stock was sold I commenced returning money, and have been doing this very thing every year since, because the demand was greater than the supply. I predict that this will be the case for years to come—in fact, it looks to me as though the demand will grow every year as the people become familiar with the virtues of these great egg machines. Soon after my stock was gone inquiries for hatching eggs began to arrive. They increased as the season advanced. Before the season was half over I had all the orders for hatching eggs I could fill. I had reserved enough of my best birds to mate up four pens, and could have sold all the eggs from three times as many pens, had I had them. I hatched more chicks the following Spring, as I wanted to get ready for a greater demand the following year.

This chapter is more or less of an "experience meeting" taken from bumps I have received while traveling on the road and in the poultry business since then. The science of salesmanship is of just as much interest to a successful poultry man as it is to a successful salesman in any line.

Getting Business by Letter

There are two ways to make sales: First, by personal interview, and second, by letter. I told you a short time ago that by far the best way to sell poultry is by letter or "direct by mail." The man on the ground finds it somewhat easier to make sales than the man who has to sell by



One day's shipment of eggs

letter, because he can talk with and size up his prospective customers, while the absent salesman has to read between the lines the kind of buyer he is dealing with. The average experienced drummer knows how to approach a buyer almost the moment he sees him. With the mail system this must be acquired by reading between the lines of the letter. It behooves him to conduct his correspondence to get the best results. It is here where many a beginner fails.

In preceding pages I have told of the importance of advertising. Advertising is the forerunner of success. The journals have done their part. They have brought inquiries to you. They have brought prospective customers to your desk, and now it is up to you to make the sale. The paper has done its part when it gets you the inquiry. Now, go after and land the business.

When you receive an answer to your advertisement you have a reasonable assurance that the writer is interested, whether he sends his inquiry on a post card or a piece of rough paper, or fine stationery, or whether it is written with pencil, pen or typewriter. Answer all inquiries carefully and promptly.

What About Stationery?

Use a neat grade of stationery with an attractive but not amateurish letter head, and then a complete descriptive circular or catalog, just whichever your business will justify. You wouldn't go out to solicit orders wearing a pair of torn trousers, ragged shirt and barefooted, nor should you send out cheap stationery with poor printing, expecting to get good orders. Keep in mind that the advertising you mail out is your personal representative and your honesty and the merit of the merchandise you offer will be judged quite largely by the advertising material. Don't handicap your proposition with cheap printed matter—I say this from my own bitter experience and not because I am boosting the game of any printer.

Yes, it's very important to have good quality paper in your stationery and catalog, but it is very much more important to have a good grade of stock and a breed with merit. You have got to have the birds to back up your sales talk or you won't get repeat business and we couldn't stay in business very long if it wasn't for our repeat customers who come back and buy from us year after year. When you have quality, you can talk quality and your good stationery will be in harmony with the high standard of your stock.

By building your reputation on high-grade quality you will build your business on a solid foundation and you will have a trade that will stay with you. It will not be a difficult matter to take your customers up the four steps of the ladder of salesmanship when you have something to sell that is in demand. If you will bear in mind the points I have mentioned you will find that you will not require twenty years' experience on the road to sell chickens and hatching eggs, and sell all you can raise.

Service Principle in Advertising

There is a service as well as a commercial principle involved in advertising. Think of the fact that you are rendering a service to a man when you sell him your eggs or stock. Talk of the advantages he will gain and be convinced in your own mind that he actually will secure these advantages of pleasure and profit. Pleasure and profit are the two things most interesting to the average buyer.

Contents of Advertisements

In writing your advertisements, talk more of fine breeding, pure strain, good carriage, beauty, flavor, size and so on—give specific instances of egg-laying records and prizes won, try and find little incidents and stories

from your daily contact with the birds, that you can put into advertisements in chatty style. It is the human, common, ordinary every day instances of life that are most interesting to other people.

Try and carry on your advertising in publications whose readers are appreciative of fine poultry and who have the means as well as the inclination to buy it. Change your copy frequently so that you will always have a different idea running to make people "look." Advertising is like eggs, it must be fresh.

Appeal to the Beginner

Keep the beginner constantly in mind and word your advertising for his comprehension. If he understands, the rest of the folks will. Remember that the beginners are eager for the best stock, and are larger buyers than the older breeders. They are certainly worth catering to. Although I have been in the poultry business for a good many years, about 50% of my business each year comes from new beginners. This is due partly to the fact that each year my business increases accordingly. But I am continually wording my advertising to appeal to the beginner. When I receive an inquiry from my journal advertising, I send out my catalog, together with a friendly letter and I follow this up three times to keep my proposition before the prospect and remind him that I am ready to serve him promptly.

Price is secondary to the quality of your stock and price should be the last thing about which you talk. You should have the reader thoroughly sold on your proposition before you say a word to him about how much the birds are going to cost him. Then he will have the attitude where he feels that any reasonable sum isn't too much.

As a conclusion for these two chapters on advertising and salesmanship, I want to leave those 4 L's. First, in your advertising you should put in something in the way of an illustration or heading that will cause a great many readers to LOOK. Then, your appeal must be of such a nature that it will either make the reader actually smile or feel good all over. It will make him LIKE your message in other words. Then it should have enough of a "kick" in it and tell him just enough about your proposition so that he will be anxious to LEARN more about the stock you have to offer. This will result in his inquiry and then your printed matter should be of such a nature and your letters should be so frank and friendly, that you will LAND him with the least possible delay.

CHAPTER X

WHAT TO DO EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR



THERE is something to do in the chicken business every month in the year. I have told you of my experience during the first five years, up to the time when I moved from the home in Berea with its "Town Lot" poultry plant—out to the spacious acres of our present poultry farm directly adjoining Berea. Now I am going to talk over in detail how I conducted the poultry business throughout the twelve months of the year. Very little will be said regarding some of these months, because they run along very much like others, but when any changes in the program are to be made, or when any special detail is to be taken care of in a certain month, I have jotted it down for your information.

My year begins with August—this is simply because I started my venture during that month. This time of the year is generally quiet on the farm. At present I take advantage of the dull season to prepare my advertisements. During this month I place my contracts for the year's advertising. The chicks are well advanced by this time so I can see what I have to sell, and what the prospects are for the coming year. As grains are cheaper at this time of the year, I buy up all the wheat and grain required for the season. By doing this I find it very economical, and generally save quite an item by buying in August rather than in December. By buying direct from the farmer I also save the feed man's profit, which is also quite an item. I have found it a good time to place my order for shipping boxes, baskets and other sup-

plies. If I waited until late in the season to buy these things, I might be delayed and might not be able to get them when I really needed them.

AUGUST

I find little to do with the stock during August, except to keep them free from lice. It is very important that this is watched closely, and especially the old male birds.

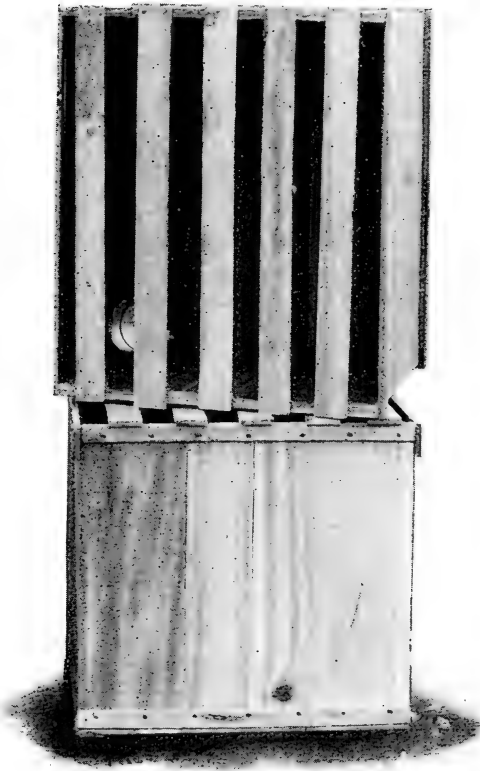
SEPTEMBER

September finds the pullets ready for the laying house. They should be placed in their laying houses early enough to get accustomed to their new quarters by the time they are ready to lay. The cockerels have developed sufficiently to admit of judging their quality intelligently so the poor grades can be sold. It is always good policy to keep the best for sale and butcher the rest. By doing this early I have more room for my growing stock. The colony houses that housed fifty birds comfortably when younger, have now become crowded since the birds have developed. By disposing of the culls at the market, the good birds have a better show.

The houses are thoroughly cleaned, and buildings that are not sprayed every month should be whitewashed at this time. The dust boxes are looked after and plenty of dust is put in them. The nests are cleaned out well and fresh straw put in them. This is done every month or so, and should be watched closely in the fall of the year.

OCTOBER

October brings the fall rains. The litter is now brought in and a liberal supply of straw placed on the floors. The fowls are glad to seek shelter from the cold rains, and by having a good supply of litter on the floor at this season of



The above illustrates shipping boxes. These are light and have sufficient strength to stand considerable rough handling. They are described on another page.

the year, it is an easy matter to keep them active and busy by feeding them grain in it.

In some sections the weather commences to become chilly early, and October has placed her leaves on Summer's grave. This will remind us that the good old summer has passed and the cold blasts of winter are near. It is time that

we are making preparations for winter. All the buildings should be put in good repair for the rough weather to come.

NOVEMBER

In most sections November brings the cold rains and rough weather, and in fact in some sections the winter is well on the way. Many breeders are careless about their stock at this season, and apparently do not take better care of their birds than the farmer who allows them to seek shelter on the south side of a barbed wire fence. The cockerels should be placed in their winter quarters before the weather gets too rough, but of course they can be allowed to run during the fine days. The changes are sudden at this season of the year, so it is a good plan to add a little tonic to their drinking water. There are several good kinds on the market.

WINTER

The snow generally arrives before December is very old, and it is time that the birds are now confined to their winter quarters permanently. Fall sales have materially reduced the surplus stock, so the winter quarters are not so badly crowded as was anticipated. The early shows are now at hand, and it is time the exhibition stock is conditioned for the show room.

There is a great contrast in the work it takes to condition different breeds. White fowls have to be washed, which is a lot of work in contrast with the easy manner in which a colored bird is prepared for exhibition. To condition them, all that is necessary is to wash off the feet and shanks in water, sponge off the comb, face and wattles with alcohol, and then apply a mixture composed of two parts of alcohol, one part of glycerine, and three drops of sassafras and five drops of sweet oil to each teaspoonful of mixture.

This preparation may also be applied to the shanks after bathing.

I will probably continue to exhibit my birds during January. The sales have kept up and the surplus stock is nearly sold off. However, orders are still coming in, but the stock is reduced to about what will be wanted for the breeding pens.

SPRING

In previous chapters I have pretty well outlined the spring's work, getting the incubator started and "training up the baby chicks in the way they should go." With the approach of summer it is very important to see that, even though your venture is carried forward on a small lot, the birds have plenty of fresh air and ventilation. Don't be afraid about exposing them to summer drafts. By all means protect them from the damp days of spring and summer and every chill. But don't be overzealous and shut out fresh air and abundant sunlight. Give them all the free range your conditions will permit.



CHAPTER XI

OPPORTUNITY IN POULTRY

THE CHICKEN INDUSTRY



THE hen has surely made wonderful strides during the past few years. The value of the products of the hen is greater than the value of the entire wheat crop. In 1900 the chicken industry started upward with leaps and bounds, keeping up such a fast pace that today it is only surpassed in value by the corn, hay, and cotton. The Government reports place the products of the hen at over one billion dollars annually. The day is not far distant when the poultry industry will be a two billion dollar industry and will lead the live stock and grain growing industries of the country.

The ordinary prophet cannot tell with any degree of certainty what she will do in the future. There has never been a time when the demand for fresh eggs and dressed poultry was so great. When the price of fresh eggs goes up to sixty or sixty-five cents a dozen, we wonder who will buy them. But still they sell, and the demand is greater than the supply. There seems to be a market in all the large cities for more fresh eggs than can be obtained during the Winter months, when the prices are the highest. There does not seem to be any limit to the demand. Prices have increased about 50 per cent during the past ten years. People are beginning to believe that it is better to eat more eggs, even at a high price, than so much meat. There has never been such a demand for pure bred stock and hatching eggs from standard bred poultry as at the present time. The prices that good birds bring

are simply wonderful. It is not an uncommon thing for a good specimen to sell for one hundred dollars. There was a time when a setting of eggs at one dollar was considered high. Now it is an easy matter to find many breeders charging a dollar for a single egg, or fifteen dollars per setting. They not only ask this price but get it, and the purchasers are satisfied that they are getting value for their money. There are a number of breeders who are getting from two to five dollars each for their best eggs. They are giving many years of expert breeding in these eggs, and as a rule the buyer feels that he is getting all he pays for.

GOOD TIME TO GET INTERESTED IN POULTRY

It is good time for every person interested in poultry to get busy. If you have a place where you can keep a few fowls, make ready for them and invest in a trio or pen of a good breed. From such a start quite a nice lot of well-bred birds can be obtained by another year. Considering the demand for Standard bred birds, it would be well to get something good in quality. It is not necessary to pay such a big price, if they are bought from a reputable breeder and he knows what is wanted and how much is to be invested. If he cannot fill the bill he will say so.

From this start a good-sized flock will be raised and be ready for business in another year; then hatching eggs and probably a few baby chicks, if you have incubators in which to hatch them, can be supplied to buyers. There are always people in every community who want a few settings of eggs or some baby chicks of some good breed, and with a good breed some business can be done without much advertising. Of course, it will be found that it pays to advertise; and the longer you are in the business, the more this will be appreciated. With this start you are now in a position to advance,

since the first efforts have been successful, and it is reasonable to suppose that a much larger business could be handled successfully.

Fresh eggs and broilers can be supplied the market, or a business can be made of supplying the demand for baby chicks in the vicinity; or one could branch out, advertise more, send day-old chicks and hatching eggs throughout the country, and develop a business on pure bred stock by selling them in trios, pens, etc. After one breed has been handled a while, proficiency in judging the merits of the breed will come. Because of this, you are in a position to select the best of your stock to fill orders, to make up breeding pens, or fit the birds for the show room. Here a reputation may be gained that will put you among the foremost breeders of your variety. This cannot be done in a day, but persistent efforts are sure to bring their rewards. There is a mighty advertising influence gained by the winning of the blue ribbons. Some breeders have been so fortunate in the show room in winning so many prizes that very little advertising was necessary to sell all their stock.

POSSIBILITIES OF THE HEN

The hen has possibilities, for you never know where she will lead you. One thing is certain, and that is hard work, carefulness, and caution are bound to succeed. I know of one man in particular who started on a small scale, but who has succeeded year by year until at present he has a fine plant and is doing a nice business. In fact, I am acquainted with several men who have started in a small way, and who by their careful and industrious habits have built large chicken farms from a very small start. Put the hen against time and labor and she will never fail. Stick to the hen, and work and care will be crowned with success.

For twenty long years I traveled for a large wholesale manufacturing company and am now delighted to say that I am enjoying a much larger income and taking life easier. Although I am just as busy as ever, I am enjoying all the freedom the world affords. In place of being bound by the obligations an employee owes to his employer, who pays for his time and efforts, I feel free to go and come as my pleasure dictates. I do not wish to infer that the average employee is a slave bound by harsh ties. Not so. My employers were very courteous and generous, and were men of splendid character.

I will venture to say that your employer is equally good to you if you are trying to be fair with him. I have nothing to say against the employee who is doing his duty in an honorable avocation. I say, "Stand by your employer and give him your best efforts, and remember, you will never receive a good salary until you earn it." In case your salary is not large enough to supply the comforts you desire for your family, don't become discouraged. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." I am sure that my experience may be an object lesson to you. I would not advise you to resign your position and expect to get rich by keeping a few hens. I would suggest that you start in a small way. Buy the best stock or eggs you can afford. Don't try to succeed by buying a five-dollar trio and putting them into an expensive pen. Better buy good stock—if you have to keep them in a piano box for the first year.

POULTRY BUSINESS OFFERS GRAND OPPORTUNITIES

After you get started it is an easy matter to improve your buildings and add to them as your business grows. I believe there is no business under the sun that offers such

grand opportunities as the poultry business. Many a man packs his belongings and travels far away looking for opportunity when there are golden opportunities rapping at his door. I know of no business that pays as large dividends on the capital invested as the chicken business. It affords the busy city man much recreation after his hard day's work is over in the shop or office. It gives profitable employment to the man whose health is impaired and who is not fit for strenuous life that he was accustomed to in his younger days. Many a good housewife has found the chicken business a great help in assisting her invalid husband in making a living. Many a mortgage has been paid off a home by the husband raising chickens before and after working hours and at the same time enjoying pleasant recreation.

PEPFUL POULTRY FOR PALE PEOPLE

For the period of the war, and especially these present months of reconstruction during which I am writing, men and women have been working under a severe tension. How many of your friends are bordering on a nervous breakdown? It has been astonishing to me to find how many men and women have been burning the candle at both ends—partly because of their splendid patriotism, to be sure—but also in part due to their negligence of sufficient sunshine, fresh air and exercise—the same identical qualities which are so necessary in producing vital, profitable poultry.

I believe that there is a definite movement on the part of thousands of men and women who have been spreading themselves too thin, to seek some interesting and yet profitable outdoor diversion—and it is quite natural that a great many of these people should investigate and accept the raising of poultry as one practical solution of that very important problem.

SAVING ON THE COST OF LIVING

I have had literally thousands of letters from families, dotted here and there over the entire North American continent, telling me that with the aid of a few good laying hens, they have helped keep down the cost of living and had more than the average laboring man's family (for example) can boast in the way of an abundance of healthy food.

For the little folks there is just as much fun raising a few lively chickens, as there is managing a "herd" of rabbits. But most boys and girls prefer the beauty of thoroughbred poultry to any animal pets, besides they don't require so much work and they produce a return in the form of eggs, nearly every day. From an educational standpoint, they are more valuable to the children than other pets, because they combine profit with pleasure.

BEGIN NOW!

Any time but "too late" is a good time to start keeping poultry, because if they are looked after with ordinary common sense, they will absolutely help to keep you.





"A LITTLE JOURNEY AMONG ANCONAS"

There has been a considerable and growing demand for a complete book on Anconas. A book that goes back to the Origin (so far as can be determined) of these birds, traces their history, characteristics, habits and lays bare the expert observations of people who have studied poultry for years and made profit from them.

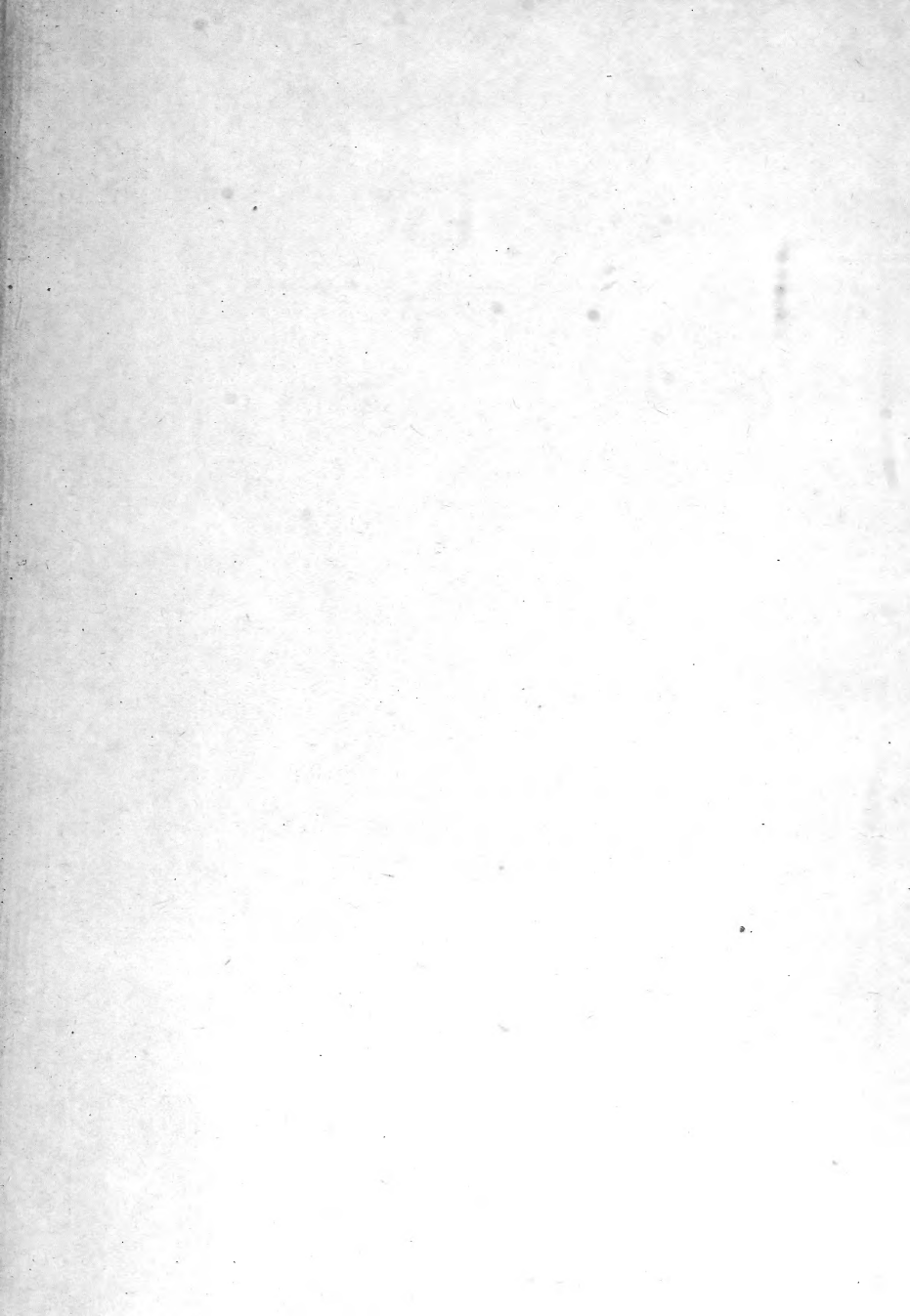
Such a book has been written—some of my friends who have looked over the manuscript tell me "as interestingly as a good novel"—it has been published with many illustrations (both photographic and with accurate sketches) and is now ready for distribution.

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